

THE DIFFICULTY GETTING POSTAGE STAMPS PERFINED

Rosemary Smith.

If you look back at Bulletin 272 Page 6-7 you will find reference to London Regional Passenger Committee trying to obtain further supplies of stamps perforated with the initials LR/PC, particularly the 1st & 2nd class (NVI) stamps in sheet form. The LRPC was told by Checkpoint that they (Checkpoint) were unable to purchase sheets of NVI stamps.

Via Brian Merryweather, I have been furnished with the ensuing correspondence from LRPC secretary (Rufus Barnes) to the Royal Mail and Checkpoint. It perhaps gives a pointer as to why firms are no longer using perfins. The following extracts from the letters cover the salient facts appertaining to perfins without distorting the whole tenor of the correspondence.

19th Jan. '95 - from Royal Mail to Rufus Barnes.

"I understand that the London Regional Passengers Committee that you represent wished to purchase a supply of First and Second Class Stamps in sheets of the Non Value Indicator (NVI) variety. Further to this, your organisation prefers to use postage stamps that carry the initials LRPC perforated through each stamp, as an internal security measure.

"Royal Mail originally only sold NVI Stamps in book format. Recognising the economy that NVI stamps offered customers, Royal Mail launched these stamps in sheet form via a mail order facility. The NVI sheets are not normal stock available at Post Offices, and only a limited quantity are provided for Post Office counters specialising in meeting the needs of Philatelists.

"As a result of the success of the mail order, RM has now set up a free mail order network solely for businesses. This provides an immediate response facility, orders can be faxed or phoned.

"These stamps are available in quantities of 100 at a time. There is no reason why these stamps would not be made available to any customer purchasing NVI stamps in accordance with RM normal sales procedures.

"RM cannot undertake the individual perforation of stamps involving company initials, and such work is undertaken by third parties specialising in this service. One such business is Checkpoint Security Services Ltd. I believe they have adopted the business previously dealt with by Slopers. In order to clarify any misunderstandings, I have telephoned Checkpoint Security Services to explain the ease of ordering NVI stamps by post."

7th Feb.'95 - from Rufus Barnes to Checkpoint.

"I understand from RM that (he) spoke to you recently about the procedure for ordering NVI stamps by post, so that your company can perforate them with individual company logos, etc.

"This is a facility which the LRPC has been seeking for some time - we have been customers of both your company and Slopers Ltd for sheets of stamps of various denominations, in the past, but are now looking for NVI stamps to be perforated.

"If your company is willing to provide this service, will you please let me know how much (etc) and what quantities we would need to order".

27th Feb.'95 - from Checkpoint to Rufus Barnes.

"RM did indeed explain the procedure for ordering NVI stamps by post. Although we were already aware of this procedure.

"Unfortunately this element of our business has declined drastically over the years and will not support any increase to the administrative costs it carries. The Royal Mail will not supply us these stamps through our current ordering procedure, which is handled by the local Post Office Counters Ltd organisation. We have considered moving all our business to the postal service (British Philatelic Bureau) however the trading conditions required by that organisation were not acceptable to us.

"However should you wish to purchase the stamps from the Royal Mail and send them to us, we would perforate them on our normal charging basis."

I leave it to members to make what they will of these statements by Checkpoint but it is no surprise that business has declined if all customers have been given a similar run-around.

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